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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y - ADDED ADDRESSEE AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

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SUBJECT: BINTAN ROUNDTABLE AND MANADO OCEAN DECLARATION

REF: A. Shishak-Hayes email, October 29, 2008.
[1](#)B. JAKARTA 1919
[1](#)C. JAKARTA 1880
[1](#)D. JAKARTA 1766

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[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary: The Government of Indonesia (GOI) hosted a roundtable meeting last week in Bintan, Indonesia, to prepare for the World Ocean Conference (WOC). At the Roundtable, the GOI presented a draft Manado Ocean Declaration (MOD) that was substantially different from an earlier draft (ref B). Many participants recommended that the MOD be shorter, more focused, and clearly differentiated from the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) process. They also suggested that it list supportable actions that typically fall under the purview of Ministers of Oceans and Fisheries, in order to get political buy-in from many countries. The GOI welcomed the "positive" comments of the USG and other participants, and welcomed additional comments on future iterations of the draft MOD. The GOI will circulate a new draft in late November. End Summary.

Unexpected: The New Manado Ocean Declaration Text

[1](#)2. (SBU) Approximately 50 delegates took part in the International Roundtable on the World Ocean Conference (the Roundtable) from October 30-31, 2008. (Note: The formal goal of the WOC, taking place from May 11-15, 2009 in Manado, Indonesia, is to produce the MOD. End Note). The participants received a new, substantially revised, draft MOD (ref A). Surprised by this, most international participants were unable to provide detailed, substantive comments. However, they (in particular, the U.S., Canada, Australia, GEF and UNEP) recommended that the GOI carefully review it and alter the content and tone so that it reads like a document focused on the importance of oceans, in the context of climate change impacts, not one primarily about climate change. They also asked the GOI to clearly differentiate the MOD from the UNFCCC process.

[1](#)3. (SBU) Many participants recommended that the MOD be short and focused on several key themes. They also suggested that the MOD list practical, achievable, supportable actions that typically fall

under the purview of Ministers of Oceans and Fisheries. Some hoped that the MOD would read more like a speech outlining a vision, rather than a "typical" UN document. Priorities and opportunities should be clearly articulated in the MOD, participants stressed. Actions should be realistic and tangible and use existing mechanisms and processes.

¶4. (SBU) Post conveyed the consolidated USG comments provided by the Department on the earlier draft MOD. The GOI welcomed the "positive" comments of the USG, and said that participants' observations were encouraging and useful for the next step of redrafting the MOD. GOI officials later also welcomed any additional comments on the new revised draft that the USG can provide before the end of November (see para 12).

¶5. (SBU) GOI officials at the Roundtable said unofficially that they hope to have all Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) sign the MOD. USG and other participants noted that this was highly ambitious and that even a smaller group of signatories would be challenging given the short timeframe, but that having a simpler, more focused text is even more important if this is the goal.

Government of Indonesia Perspectives

¶6. (U) In introductory remarks, Minister of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (MMAF) Freddy Numberi challenged participants to "protect marine resources that we all share" and to help craft a declaration and conference that would change mindsets about the importance of oceans. "No one country alone can address climate change", he said, and the MOD should lead to practical action. Let us change what we can, he concluded, bearing in mind differences between countries' circumstances.

¶7. (U) The MFA's Director General for Legal Affairs and International Treaties sent written remarks that focused on oceans as the missing element in climate change talks, and on the need to

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discuss the "positive interplay" between oceans and climate change. Other MFA officials stated that the objective of the MOD was to build consensus on practical actions to address the adverse impacts of climate change on ocean ecosystems, complementing the existing climate change framework. They would register the MOD as a UN document to serve as a future reference on ocean and climate issues.

Role of Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands

¶8. (U) Dr. Biliانا Cicin-Sain, Co-Chair of Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands (Global Forum) gave a presentation emphasizing the importance of understanding--and developing policy responses to--global ocean changes, encouraging a wide range of adaptation efforts, and properly studying mitigation efforts that propose to use the ocean (e.g. iron fertilization). Dr. Cicin-Sain noted that the WOC is a government-led effort but that the Global Forum is providing expert input and helping to coordinate the program for Global Ocean Policy Day (see below).

Structure of the World Ocean Conference

¶9. (U) Presentations by the GOI and Global Forum indicated that they are still working on the structure and content of the WOC, and are open to suggestions. A bare-bones structure was outlined:

May 11: Presentation to senior officials by experts on the two sub-themes, climate change impacts on the ocean and the role of the ocean, followed by discussion of the draft MOD.

May 12: Discussion and finalization of draft MOD by senior officials, presentation of draft to Ministers.

May 13: Global Ocean Policy Day. Hold several workshops on key climate-ocean topics, possibly making use of some Working Groups under the Global Forum.

May 14: Ministers deliberate over the draft MOD and issue the Declaration.

May 15: Coral Triangle Initiative Summit.

Participation and Next Steps

¶10. (U) The GOI invited 25 States as well as academic experts and international organizations to the Roundtable. Eight countries attended: U.S.A., Canada (Department of Fisheries and Oceans), China (State Oceanic Administration), Russia (represented by its embassy), Australia (Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts), Vietnam (Administration for Seas and Islands), Seychelles (Special Advisor to the President), and the Philippines (Department of Environment and Natural Resources).

¶11. (U) Other international participants included the Global Environment Facility, United Nations Environment Program, Ocean Policy Research Foundation (Japan), Advisor for Maritime Strategy, Emirate of Abu Dhabi (UAE), and the Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands. GOI representatives included officials from the Ministries of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, Environment, Foreign Affairs, and Coordinating Ministry for People's Welfare.

¶12. (SBU) The GOI will circulate a revised draft of the MOD in late November for further comment. It will make additional changes based on the feedback received and then distribute this refined draft by the end of December. The GOI intends to begin the first round of consultations with States in mid-to-late January 2009. A pre-WOC meeting in February (date and venue to be determined) would constitute the second round of consultations with States.

¶12. (SBU) GOI representatives also floated the idea of a side meeting about the WOC and MOD during COP-14 in Poznan, Poland, this December. Participants suggested that this could be difficult, given the already busy schedule.

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